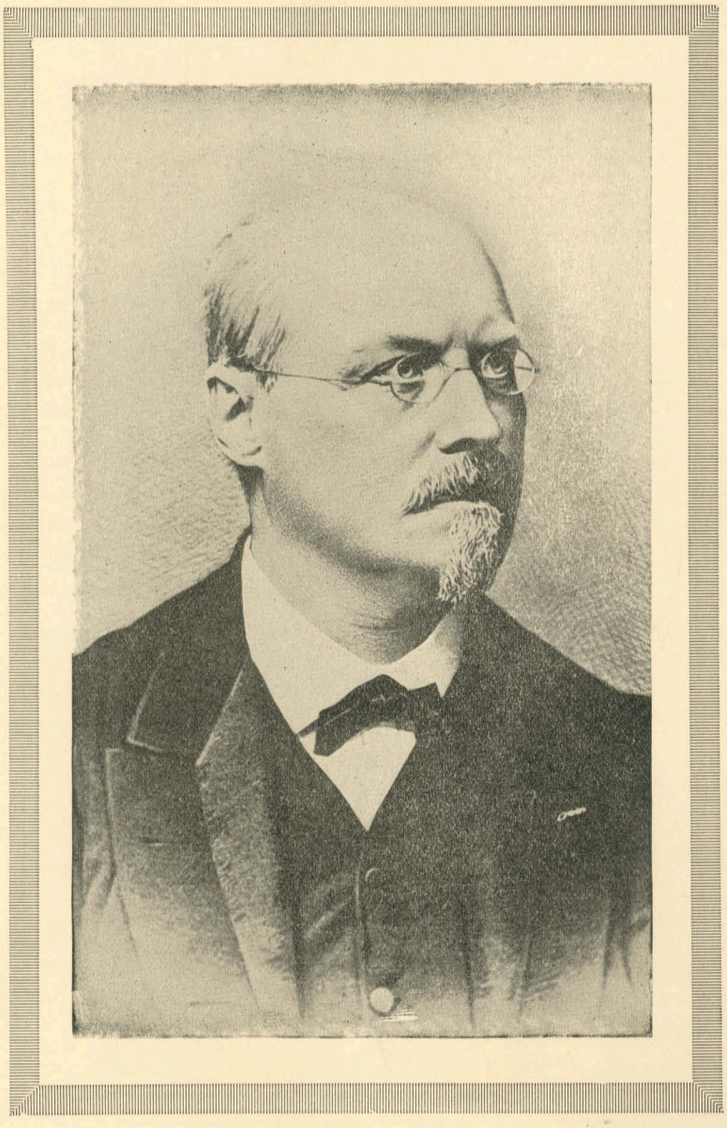
IMPROMPTU-VALSE

Op. 94

By

JOSEPH JOACHIM RAFF



REVISED EDITION WITH FINGERING, PEDALING, PHRASING, AND INSTRUCTIVE ANNOTATIONS ON INTERPRETATION AND METHOD OF STUDY
By LEOPOLD GODOWSKY

FORM AND STRUCTURE, AND HARMONIC ANALYSIS
By EDGAR STILLMAN KELLEY

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, FORM AND STRUCTURE, AND GLOSSARY
By EMERSON WHITHORNE

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IMPROMPTU - VALSE, Op. 94.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—JOSEPH JOACHIM RAFF.

Born at Lachen, Lake of Zurich, Switzerland, May 27, 1822.
Died at Frankfort-on-Main, June 24, 1882.

THE eminent composers of music have, with few exceptions, paid the price of their achievement by suffering, and in many instances privation. Joseph Joachim Raff would seem to have been specially selected by the fates as an object of their scorn.

The son of an organist in the town of Wiessenstettin in Würtemberg, he received his early education in the home of his parents and later at the Jesuit Lyceum of Schwyz. Even in his school career he displayed the same perseverance and diligence which characterized his whole life, for he then carried off the first prizes in German, Latin and Mathematics. A lack of means forced him to give up his classical studies and devote himself to school teaching, yet even with this irksome work he studied the piano and violin assiduously without the help of masters. He was also able to make such rapid progress in composition that Mendelssohn, to whom he had sent some manuscripts, gave him a letter to Breitkopf and Haertel. This led to the appearance in print of some of his early works.

At this period when his life was extremely difficult, his means of support being quite inadequate, Liszt became interested in him; he took him on one of his concert tours, when by good fortune Raff met Mendelssohn at Cologne. This was in 1846 and it was arranged that he should go to Leipsic to study with the master, but before this project could be carried out Mendelssohn died.

Another plan which promised much also collapsed at this time. Liszt had succeeded in interesting the Viennese publisher, Mecchetti, in the young musician, and Raff was even making the journey to Vienna to see Mecchetti when the latter died. In 1850 he went to Weimar where Liszt was located; there he rewrote his opera "King Alfred," which was produced at the Court Theatre by Liszt and subsequently given many performances.

The Impromptu-Valse, Op. 94, was written before his First Symphony, which obtained the prize offered by the "Society of Friends of Music," in Vienna; so it probably was composed at Wiesbaden about the time of his marriage. Altogether Raff wrote eleven symphonies, a number of operas, and other works in all departments of composition. His last opus was numbered 216, so prolific was he in his output.

Had Raff possessed more distinction of intellect and loftier ideals, he would undoubtedly take rank among the composers of first importance, for his technic was sound and his fertility astounding. But his nature was a peculiarly confused mixture of the ideal and the banal which greatly mitigated against the steady production of the best work.

POETIC IDEA: This composition at first consideration appears to be more in the style of a delightfully vivacious study than an ambitious salon-piece, but the G flat section which enters at measure 77 soon dispels this illusion. Here a Chopinesque theme is treated in the true romantic style, and at measure 109 a modulation of great beauty is introduced, repeated in another form at measure 146. This gradually brings us back to the G flat theme, reminiscences of which occur in measures 189 and 193. Although there are influences evident of both Chopin and Liszt the composition may be taken as a typical example of Raff's first period.

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METHOD OF STUDY: In order to obtain the fluency and facility required for the first subject, the fingers must be kept in close contact with the keys; this will produce a *legato* and economize the muscular energy of the fingers. Let the student notice the accents marked in the right hand and also pay close attention to the dynamic shading. In the arpeggios at measures 72 and 73 the thumb must be swung under the hand quickly so that smoothness is obtained by sufficient preparation of the thumb. At measure 77 the right hand has a singing melody to be given out in a truly lyric manner with the fundamentals in the bass sounding clearly, and the chords on the second and third beats of the measures subdued. The *tempo* must be taken up gradually at measure 92 to properly compensate the time values which have been disturbed by the *rubato* treatment of the theme. From measure 109 this method is followed until measure 125 and much actual time is thus regained which has been lost in the interpretation of the preceding page. This agogic balancing is an important factor for the student's consideration. Let the left hand predominate from measure 146 to 159 and note that the melody in the upper voice of the left hand is identical with that which occurs in the lower voice of the right hand beginning at measure 109. A very slight accent should be given in the left hand from measure 254, as follows:

PEDAGOGIC IDEA: Special emphasis is laid upon the value of a thorough comprehension of the form and harmony of the compositions under consideration. This not only widens the intellectual horizon of the student, but it enables him to appreciate many fine points of structure too often overlooked. Furthermore, it impels him to interpret the thought of the composer with a fidelity otherwise beyond his grasp. Finally, it gives him a logical method of memorizing and reading at sight.

FORM AND HARMONIC ANALYSIS: In this light and pleasing piece the outlines of the three part song-form and trio may readily be discerned. Key of B flat major. The main theme, preceded by two introductory measures, consists of a period (m. 3—10), with a cadence in D minor, repeated in m. 11—18, closing in the tonic.

Part 2 is a period (m. 19—26) constructed above an organpoint on the dominant, repeated in the tonic minor (m. 27—34), the extension of this portion (m. 35—49) being largely chromatic passage work.

Part 3 (m. 50—72) is virtually the same as part 1, with much greater emphasis placed on the tonic key at the close. A short episode (m. 73—76) leads to the key of the trio—G flat major.

Trio. Here we find the long three part song-form employed.

Part 1 is a double period (m. 77—92). It begins in the new tonic (G flat major), closes in the dominant of that key, and is repeated (m. 93—108) with a final tonic cadence.

Part 2 begins in the dominant with a modulating sequence. Note how the phrase (m. 109—112) is repeated in m. 113—116, a minor third higher. Observe also that the composer, in continuing this sequential work at m. 117, breaks the four-measure motive into smaller members, employing the melody of m. 109—110 twice, at m. 117—118, and m. 119—120, then letting it run out into a widely distributed embellishment of the diminished seventh chord, apparently on the leading tone of A minor. This chord at m. 128 is changed to the dominant seventh chord of G major, which is enharmonically identical with the chord of the augmented sixth and fifth, founded on the subdominant of F sharp minor, which naturally and gracefully resolves into its tonic (F sharp or G flat) major.

Part 3 (m. 130—145) is the same as part 1, with slight elaborations of the melody. Part 2 is then brought forth once more with the melody in the left hand and an arpeggiated figure in the right. It will be noticed that the harmonic outline of m. 109—120 is preserved exactly in m. 146—157, but at m. 158, instead of a diminished, we find a dominant seventh chord of G flat, above which a long cadenza

is elaborated, extending to the reappearance of part 3 in m. 172. The double period constituting part 3 closes with m. 187, but it will be seen that the composer has already begun at m. 186 the return to the main theme. At first this passage seems like a codetta of the trio, but at m. 186 a modulation begins which leads to an organpoint on F, the dominant of the original key, indicating a return to the main theme.

By a clever device the composer, after working with the triplet figure from the theme, effects its return, not by means of the first part, but by introducing the latter half (the portion in the tonic minor) of the second part. Hence measures 204—226 are exactly like m. 27—49. Then follows the first part of the main theme, m. 227—243 corresponding to m. 50—66, excepting that the left hand simply plays the tonic chord in m. 242, resting in m. 243. These two measures are now naturally extended into a coda, closing with m. 261, after which one may imagine a three measure rest for the sake of rhythmic symmetry, so as to balance m. 257—260.

GLOSSARY.

NAMES

Raff,	pronounced	Rähf.
Lachen,	"	Lä-khen.
Zürich,	"	Zü-rikh.
Wiessenstettin,	"	Vēs-sĕn-stĕt-tēn.
Würtemberg,	"	Vür-tĕm-bĕrg.
Mendelssohn,	"	Mĕn-dĕls-sōn.
Liszt,	"	Lĭst.
Chopin,	"	Shō-păn, (nasalized).

TERMS

Impromptu-Valse,	pronounced,	ăn-prōmp-tü väls, - extemporaneous waltz.
allegro vivace,	"	äl-lā-grō vē-vä-tshĕ, - with speed and vivacity.
veloce,	"	vē-lō-tshĕ, - with velocity.
legato,	"	lĕ-gä-tō, - smoothly.
accelerando,	"	ät-tshĕl-ĕr-rän-dō, - increasing the speed.
crescendo,	"	crĕ-shĕn-dō, - increasing the tone.
poco a poco,	"	pō-kō ä pō-kō, - little by little.
decrescendo,	"	dĕ-krĕ-shĕn-dō, - diminishing in tone.
a tempo,	"	ä tĕm-pō, - in time.
dolce,	"	dōl-tshĕ, - softly.
rubato,	"	roo-bäh-tō, - with rhythmical freedom.
con espressione,	"	kŏn ĕs-prĕs-sē-ō-nĕ, - with expression.
marcato,	"	mär-kä-tō, - marked.
il basso fondamentale,	"	ĭl bäs-sō fŏn-dä-mĕn-tä-lĕ, - the bass fundamentals.
dolcissimo,	"	dōl-tshĭs-sē-mō, - most softly and sweetly.
smorzando,	"	smŏr-tsän-dō, - dying away.
inquieto,	"	ĭn-quē-ā-tō, - agitated.
poco animato,	"	pō-kō än-ē-mä-tō, - with spirit.
stringendo,	"	strēn-jĕn-dō, - accelerating the time.
quasi cadenza,	"	quä-zĭ kä-dĕn-tsä, - in the style of a cadenza.
largamente,	"	lär-gä-mĕn-tĕ, - broadly.

a) Impromptu-Valse.

Revised and Edited by Leopold Godowsky.

J. Raff, Op. 94.

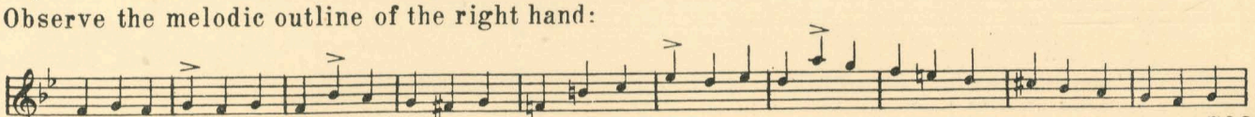
Allegro vivace. ♩. = 84.

b)

p veloce, legato

a) This pleasing drawing-room piece requires fleet and fluent fingers, charm and elegance of delivery combined with a sense for agreeable sonority.

b) Observe the melodic outline of the right hand:



etc.

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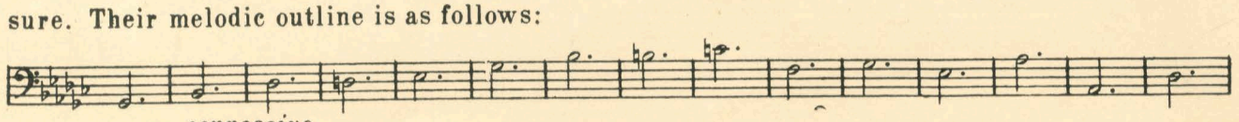
c) The left hand should be brought out in the following 24 measures.

crescendo poco a poco
f
decrescendo
a tempo
pp
Ped.

56
57
58
59
cres - cen - do -
60
61
62
63
f
64
65
66
p
67
68
69
70
pp
71
72
73
74
75
76
Ped.

d) The expressive melody so characteristic of Chopin in it's outline, harmonization and ornamental designs, must be played with a singing tone, a free and flexible rhythm (devoid of exaggeration) and a straightforward and refined sentiment.

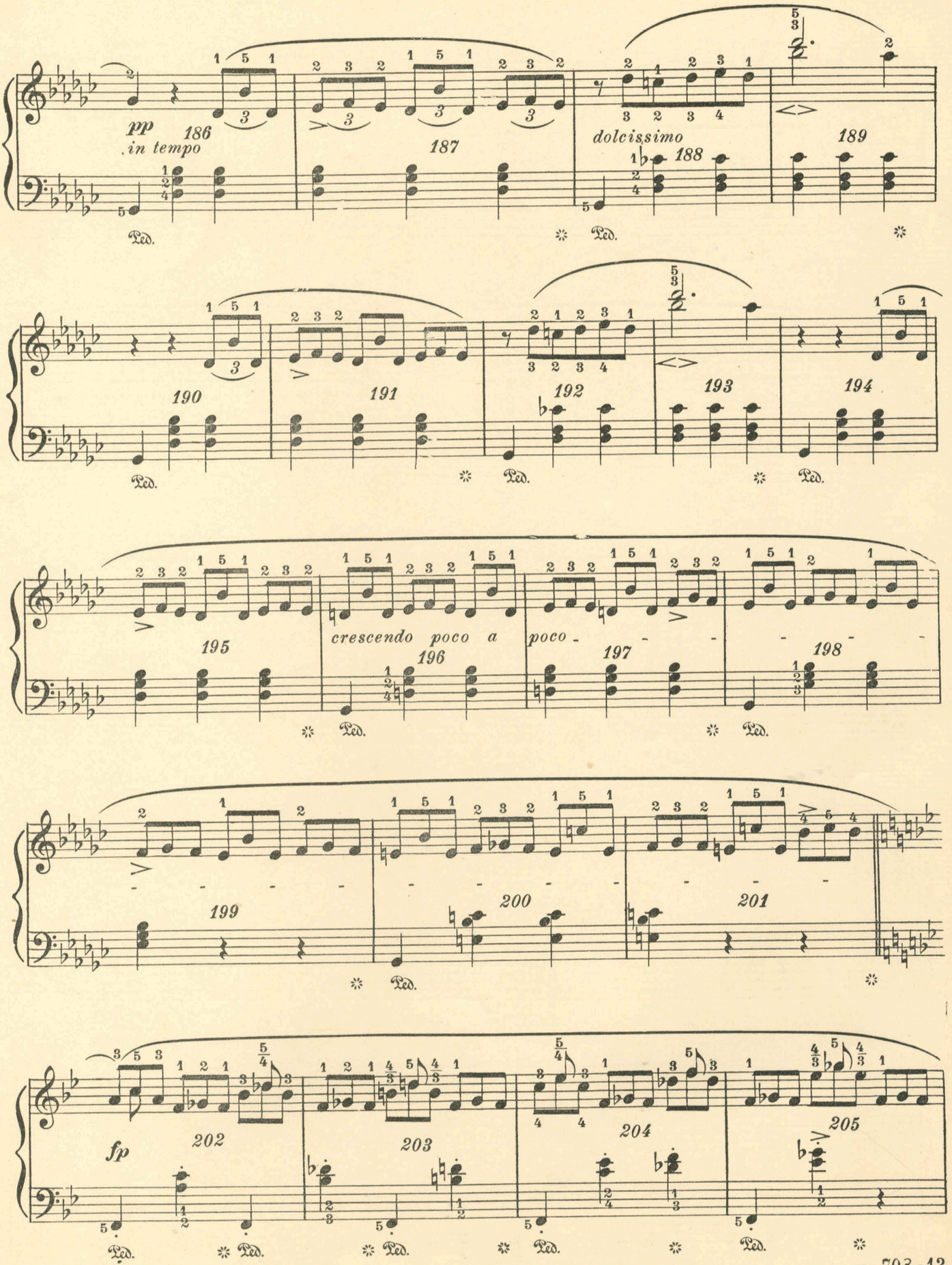
e) The fundamental notes must be slightly emphasized and sustained with the pedal throughout the measure. Their melodic outline is as follows:



f) This is more Lisztian in character and interpretation.

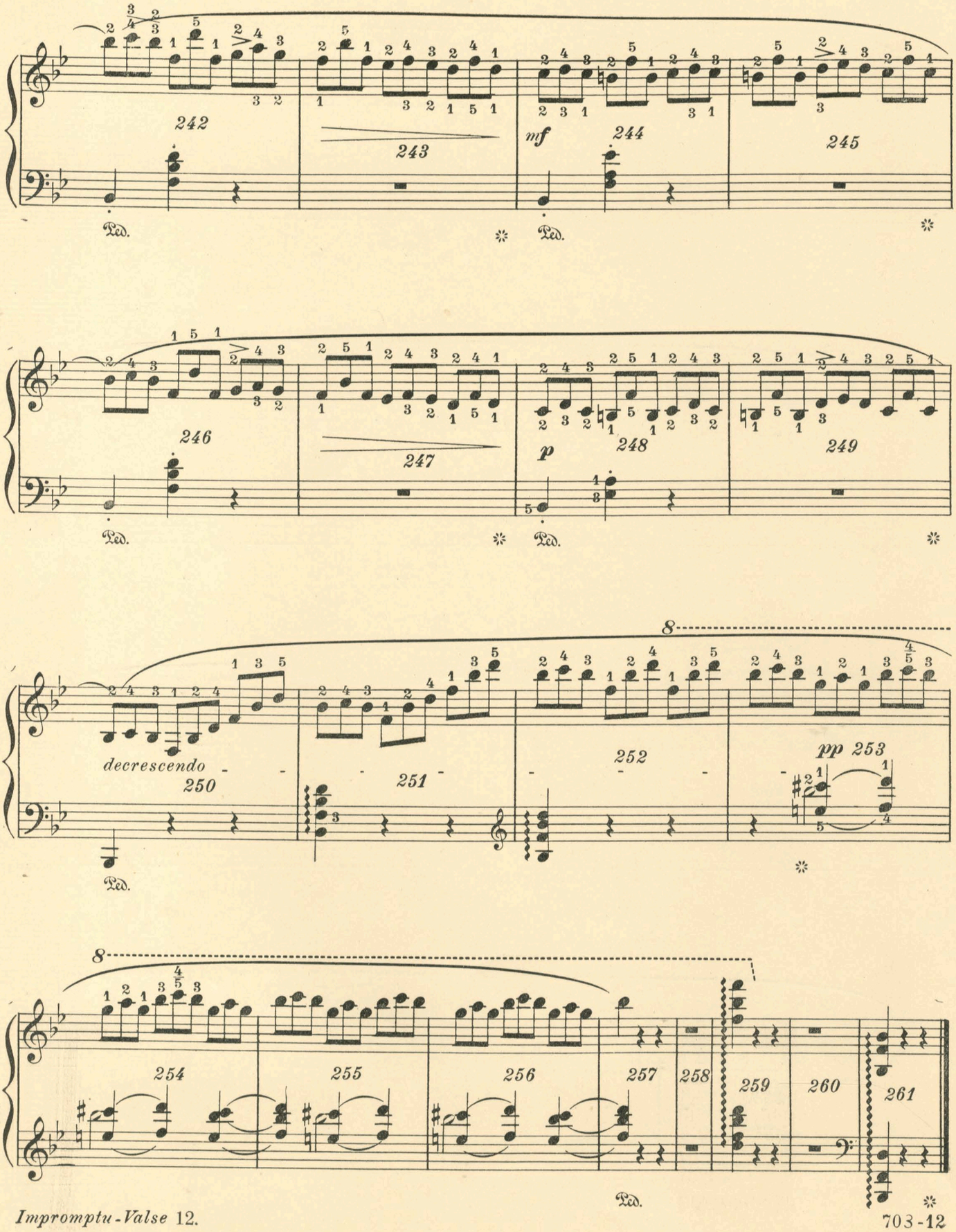
g) The observation at **f**) applies also to the following measures.

8
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
diminuendo
167
168
169
pp
170
171
p
172
Ped.
173
174
175
176
7
177
178
179
f largamente
smorzando
180
181
182
183
rit.
184
p
185


pp
in tempo
186
187
dolcissimo
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
crescendo poco a poco
196
197
198
199
200
201
fp
202
203
204
205
Ped.

206
207
208
209
210
211
p
accelerando
212
213
214
crescendo poco a poco
215
216
f
217
218
219
220
221
222
decrescendo
223
224
225
Ped.

a tempo
pp
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
crescendo
237
238
239
240
f
241
Ped.


242
243
mf
244
245
Ped.
246
247
p
248
249
decrescendo
250
251
252
pp 253
8
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261

QUESTIONS.

1. When was Raff born?
   Ans.

2. Give a sketch of his life.
   Ans.

3. What was his rank as a composer?
   Ans.

4. Explain the following terms, *rubato, accelerando, smorzando, largamente,* and *stringendo.*
   Ans.

5. Analyze this composition in brief.
   Ans.

6. What touch is used in the right hand at the beginning of the composition?
   Ans.

7. Explain agogic balance.
   Ans.

8. Give the numbers of the measures where there are two similar modulations.
   Ans.

9. What is the most striking harmonic feature of the trio?
   Ans.

10. What peculiarity is seen in the recurrence of the main theme?
    Ans.

11. Explain the difference between the first and second treatment of the second part of the trio.
    Ans.

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